

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
18 August 2005 (18.08.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/075130 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **B22C 1/22.**
9/04, 1/10, 1/16

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/GB2005/000408

(22) International Filing Date: 7 February 2005 (07.02.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0402516.9 5 February 2004 (05.02.2004) GB

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: **IMPROVED INVESTMENT CASTING PROCESS**

(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a process for the production of a shell mould, comprising the sequential steps of: (i) dipping a preformed expendable pattern into a slurry of refractory particles and colloidal liquid binder whereby to form a coating layer on said pattern, (ii) depositing particles of refractory material onto said coating, and (iii) drying, steps (i) to (iii) being repeated as often as required to produce a shell mould having the required number of coating layers, characterised in that during at least one performance of step (ii) the particles of refractory material have been premixed with a gel-forming material whereby to coat at least a portion of said refractory particles with said gel forming material such that after contact with the coating layer moisture is absorbed by the gel-forming material thereby causing gellation of the colloidal binder so reducing the time required for drying in step (iii).

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